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Geographic Analysis and Monitoring Program

Sustainable Tree Crops Project

Statement of Problem

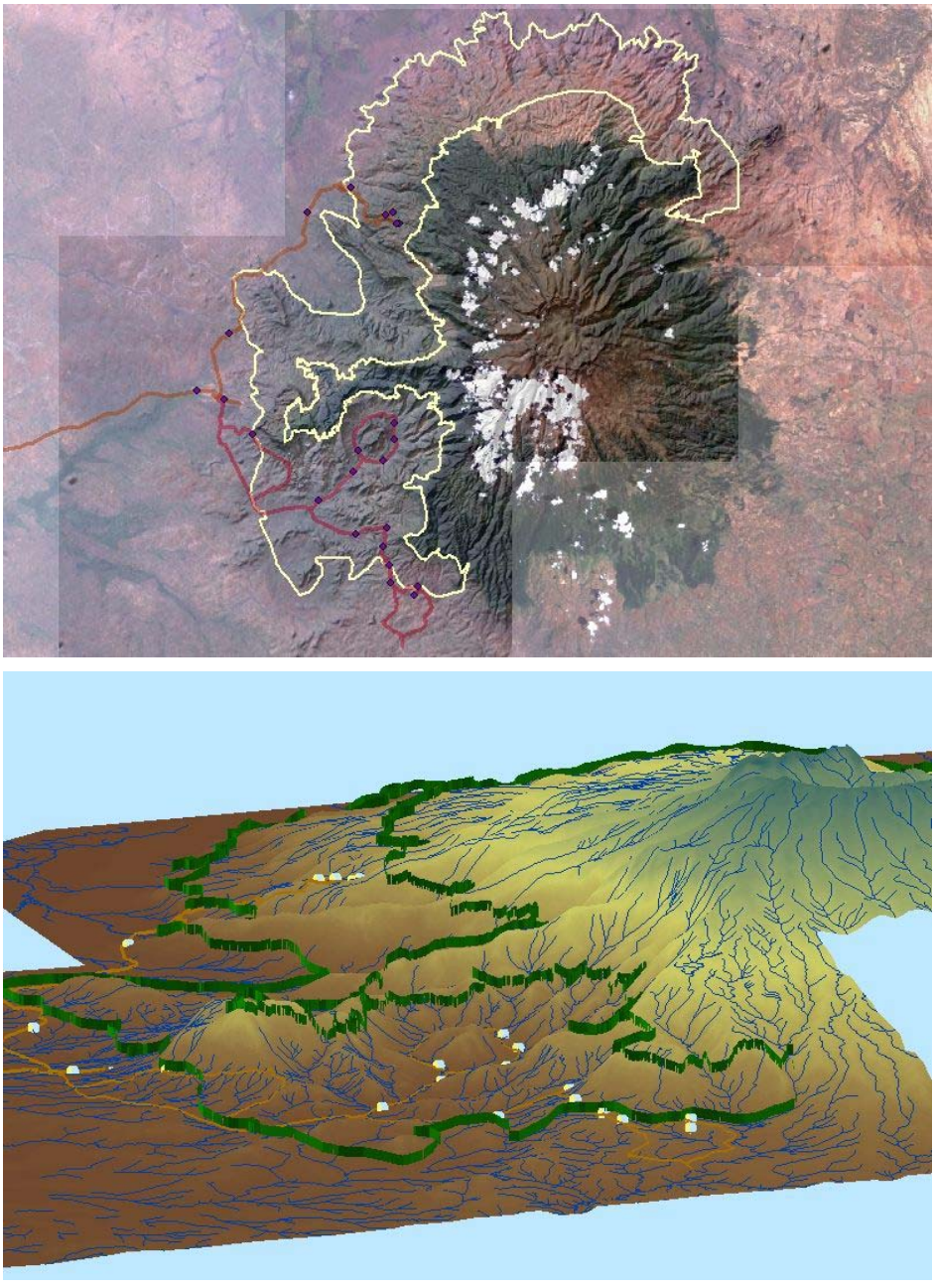
There is an urgent need for increased productivity and improved socio-economic return for farmers in developing countries while at the same time improving degraded land, enhancing product quality and market efficiency, and promoting biodiversity and resource conservation.

Objectives

This project coordinates a variety of closely related projects that support economic development, conservation practices and environmental management associated with specialty food crops, usually tress including coffee, cocoa, cashews, and bananas. The objective is to integrate new Internet and communication technologies with GPS and remotely sensed data to allow users (consumers, brokers, roasters, retailers, etc.) to receive assurance of certified or special quality products. Growers are thereby able to capture a premium for their produce. All information, including in some cases, transactions and actual on-line purchases can be available in a transparent manner on the Internet and accessible from browsers. The application integrates GPS, IMS, and Remote Sensing approaches to support sustainable development with the Internet and browser accessibility.

Relevance and Impact

These projects respond directly to provide support that will sustain competitiveness for high quality products produced in developing countries and thereby aids economic development. It has significant impact by virtue of being extended to 12 countries in Africa, most of the Central American corridor, and some countries in the Caribbean. Its impact is also seen because of the potential relevance of this approach for food safety issues both related to developing countries and within the U.S.



By combining satellite imagery, GPS coordinates, and a digital elevation model, researchers with the USAID-funded Sustainable Tree Crops project in Africa created these images showing the coffee production area (outlined in white, top, and green, bottom) on the slopes of Mt. Elgon in Uganda. Mt. Elgon National Park lies directly above this area. Shade-grown coffee farms can act as ecological buffer zones around national parks and other protected lands.

Strategy and Approach

Projects are developed with capacity building at the core. Thus, the work is undertaken with agronomy specialists, the commodity sector, export organizations, and information technology experts. The Latin America work is being directed by a leader with native Spanish capabilities

and experience in Clearinghouses in Central America. The Africa work is directed by the Project Leader with wide experience in both the approach and Africa.

For More Information

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